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SUBJECT: GUIZHOU LACKS RESOURCES TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

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CLASSIFIED BY: James A. Boughner, Consul General, United States
Consulate, Chengdu.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: A women's issues NGO-founder and researcher from the Guizhou Academy of Social Sciences recently told Congenoff that Guizhou Province -- one of China's poorest -- lacks both human and financial resources to fight trafficking in persons. Guizhou faces a serious problem with trafficking primarily due to poverty. Trafficking victims who return to their homes in Guizhou face discrimination and a lack of services. The expert said there is also an increasing problem with children from both urban and rural areas being smuggled to eastern China and sold for "adoption." Guizhou would be an ideal potential candidate for support from the G/TIP office, particularly for programs to raise awareness of employers and migrant workers about the dangers of trafficking. End Summary.

¶2. (C) During a recent reporting trip to Guizhou Province, Congenoff met informally with Li Qing (strictly protect) of the Guizhou Academy of Social Science (GASS) and founder of the domestic non-governmental organization (NGO) Guizhou Women's Capacity Building and Development Association to discuss gender issues in the province. (Note: almost all of Congenoff's requests for official meetings were denied by the Guizhou FAO. End note). Li has previously studied trafficking in persons and prostitution. In the coming year she has a research grant from the central government to study HIV/AIDS. She also has funding from GASS to begin research on the phenomenon of "left behind" children of migrant workers.

Guizhou Lacks Resources for Anti-TIP Work

¶3. (C) Li said Guizhou Province lacks both human and financial resources to fight trafficking in persons, which is a serious problem in Guizhou. Li stated the Public Security Bureau (PSB) only has one officer devoted to trafficking for the whole province, and that one person could not possibly be effective in pursuing traffickers over such a large area. (Note: Li acknowledged she knew the PSB system well because her husband was a PSB officer. End Note.) When asked about the Guizhou Women's Federation's (WF) role in anti-trafficking efforts, Li admitted the WF currently had no staff devoted to working on the issue.

Trafficking in Persons a Serious Problem in Guizhou

¶4. (C) Li acknowledged Guizhou has a serious trafficking problem primarily due to poverty. Guizhou is one of the poorest provinces in China with a per capita GDP of 4,893 RMB (USD 631),

has a large minority population, and is known as a politically conservative province. She added that disparities in economic development between Han and minority areas and urban and rural areas were also factors that made women vulnerable to trafficking. Li said many women leave voluntarily to work in other cities or provinces, but become vulnerable to deception along the way and may be forced into prostitution or other bonded labor. In an academic published in 2005, Li reported that in a 2001 case 95 women were deceived. Ninety percent of the victims were unmarried, they ranged in age from 14-34 and were largely illiterate.

15. (C) Li also noted a demographic shift. In the past, most cases of trafficking of women occurred in rural areas, but now, the crime is gradually extending to urban areas. Traffickers are forming well-organized gangs, Li said, and their methods are becoming more sophisticated. Many traffickers are now using the Internet and cross-country networks to move their victims.

Discrimination Obstacle for Returned Victims

16. (C) Li lamented that discrimination is a significant obstacle for trafficking victims who try to return home, especially in rural communities. She said there were no specific community, health, job training or other social services provided for returning victims.

Smugglers Target Children

17. (C) According to Li, the main targets of human trafficking in the 1980s and 1990s were rural women, but since the late 1990s, the crime has expanded to include "smuggling" of children. She noted that boys sold for 2000-3000 RMB (USD 258-387) in their villages would be purchased for 20,000-30,000 RMB (USD 2,580-3,870) in eastern China, primarily for the purpose of "adoption." She said she had not heard of any cases of children trafficked for prostitution or bonded labor.

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Comment

18. (SBU) Given the evident lack of financial resources, Guizhou would be an ideal potential candidate for support from the G/TIP office, provided local PSB and WF officials could provide creative ideas about how to initiate expansion of current anti-trafficking efforts. Post observes that although the central government has poured funds into fixed investment in infrastructure for Guizhou as part of the Great West Development Initiative, few funds appear to have been dispersed to local government agencies for education, health care, or social programs. Press reports have also stated that 15 percent of Guizhou's population (approximately 5 million) has left to find work outside the province. Programs to increase awareness of both employers and migrant workers about the dangers of trafficking would be an area ripe for funding.
BOUGHNER